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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this paper is to present an analysis of how prejudice against women produces bias in educational research. The first part of the paper sorts out the ways in which values can enter into educational research. The second part of the paper argues that bias can result from each of these ways due to prejudice. In the final part of the paper, through exemplifications, the analysis is given meaning in the context of prejudice against women. (Author)

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PREJUDICE AGAINST WOMEN AND BIAS IN EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH

by

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In general, let every student of nature take this as a rule, that whatever his mind seizes and dwells upon with particular satisfaction is to be held in suspicion.

Francis Bacon

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this paper is to present an analysis of how prejudice against women produces bias in educational research. The first part of the paper sorts out the ways in which values can enter into educational research. The second part of the paper argues that bias can result from each of these ways due to prejudice. In the final part of the paper, through exemplifications, the analysis is given meaning in the context of prejudice against women.

PART I

1. Values in Educational Research Content

1.1. What is worthwhile is what is valuable. Value then is the worth of a state of affairs. Since worth of states of affairs might be in terms either of what they effect or what they are in themselves, values can be either instrumental or intrinsic. As an instance, programmed instructional materials can be said to have instrumental value insofar as they effect achievement, while achievement which is self-development can be said to have intrinsic value insofar as selves are not means but ends in themselves. Selves are persons.

1.2. Educational research has as its content descriptions of the teaching-learning process. Elsewhere I have argued that 'education' taken only in one of the following senses: development, learning, training, instruction, or schooling, is either too inclusive or too exclusive.[1] Education must be taken as a teaching-learning process, and so as someone teaching something to someone somewhere. Education, therefore involves teacher, learner, curriculum, and setting. Also elsewhere I have argued

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[1] "Philosophy of Educational Science," to be published in Proceedings of the International Congress on Logic, Methodology, and Philosophy of Science, Bucharest, 1971.

that the function of the educational research process is to produce knowledge about education which I have called 'educology'.[2] Educology consists of true propositions asserting universal connections within or between teaching-learning states of affairs. Stated differently, educology consists of warranted descriptions of the properties of teachers, learners, curricula, and settings and of the interrelations of these properties.

1.3. Values can enter educational research content, because descriptions of educational states of affairs do include those of the valuing behavior of learners or teachers or persons who are part of the setting, e.g. administrators or counselors. That is to say, descriptions of teaching-learning states of affairs include an account of what persons within the teaching-learning process take as worthwhile and how these valuings interrelate and relate to other aspects of the teaching-learning process. Such an account if warranted would be part of the scientific description of education, for the science of education consists of warranted descriptions of what is (was or will be) the case. An example of such a scientific description of values would be Torrance's findings[3] that within a school climate emphasizing the so-called feminine and masculine roles both boys and girls value more highly boys' contributions even though boys and girls score equally on their contributions. A scientific description of education is not the only kind. Praxiological and philosophical descriptions also are possible, and thereby values can enter educational research content in two more ways.

1.3.1. Praxiological descriptions of education are warranted descriptions of teaching-learning practices. Since practices are organized

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[2] Methodology of Educational Inquiry, Indiana University, 1971.

[3] E. Paul Torrance, "Changing Reactions of Preadolescent Girls to Tasks Requiring Creative Scientific Thinking," Journal of Genetic Psychology, 1963, 102, 217-223.

human endeavors, they are a group of interrelated human actions (which may or may not include the use of objects) devised by humans to be effective and so related as means to ends. To be effective is to be of instrumental value. Descriptions of educational practices, consequently, are descriptions of instrumental educational values. An instance of such a description would be that of programmed instruction.

1.3.2. Philosophical descriptions of education are warranted descriptions of intrinsic values of the teaching-learning process. The intrinsic values to be described are goodness, truth, and order. Hence, divisions of philosophy of education can be demarcated: ethics and social/political philosophy, epistemology, and logic. Warranted descriptions of goodness in learner behavior (good learning) and of goodness in the teaching-learning process (good social educational behavior) constitute ethics and social/political philosophy of education. Warranted descriptions of truth in the curriculum and in its transmission compose epistemology of education, while those of order, as the structure of the curriculum and the language behavior of teacher and of learner, form the logic of education.

1.4. It should be noted that 'educational research' is being used in a less restricted sense than is usual. Educational research is not limited to inquiry which produces scientific knowledge about education. The process of inquiry which produces knowledge about educational practices is likewise included. Thus, praxiological inquiry as well is conceived as research. The extension of research into both empirical fields of knowledge, science and technology,[4] is less unusual than its extension into philosophy. In

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[4]I use 'praxiological' rather than 'technological', since 'technological' refers to the hardware aspects of educational practices and the unwanted notion of techniques as practices limited in scope.

other writings[5] I have argued that disciplined inquiry about intrinsic values is research. Educology or the result (content) of educational research, therefore, consists of three divisions: the science of education, the praxiology of education, and the philosophy of education.

1.5. To summarize 1, values can enter into educational research content as descriptions of what is either taken to be valuable or is valuable. Warranted descriptions of what is taken to be valuable are scientific, while those of what is valuable are either praxiological or philosophical depending upon whether the values are instrumental or intrinsic.

2. Values in Educational Research Practice

2.1. Values are in educational research practice, because any practice, whether or not it be an educational research practice, is a human endeavor organized so that it will effect a certain outcome. In any practice, therefore, instrumental and intrinsic values can be discerned. The outcome of the practice is what is intrinsically valuable, for it is the end of the practice. The actions of the practice effecting the outcome of the practice are what are instrumentally valuable, for they are the means of the practice. Consequently, intrinsic and instrumental values are in educational research practice.

2.1.1. To state[6] the matter differently, every practice has pragmatical, syntactical, and semantical dimensions. A practice works or fulfills a human purpose for which it was devised. When one attends to the purpose or function of a practice, one is attending to its pragmatical dimension or to its intrinsic worth. A practice, if it is to function, must be arranged and must have a significance for human being in the world.

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[5]See especially Methodology of Educational Inquiry, op. cit.

[6]A more complete statement is in the work cited in Footnote 5.

When one attends to the arrangement or form and the significance or content of a practice, one is attending to its syntactical and semantical dimensions or its instrumental worth. Form and content are the means of the practice for its end which is its function.

2.2. The intrinsic worth of educational research is its purpose or function which, as stated in 1.2, is to produce educology. The content of educational research was delineated in 1.2 and 1.3 as warranted descriptions of teaching-learning states of affairs including teaching-learning practices as well as ideal teaching-learning states of affairs. So the content is as summarized in 1.4: praxiological and philosophical as well as scientific. The form of educational research was implied in 1.2. Educational research would take the form of systems of generalizations asserting connections within or between teachers, learners, curricula, and settings. Because educational research has such a form and content, it is educology. Hence, the form and content are good for the purpose of educational research; they are of instrumental worth.

2.3. To summarize 2, values are in educational research practice as intrinsic value, its function, or as instrumental value, its form and content. Warranted generalizations which are descriptive of teaching-learning states of affairs are worthwhile for they effect what is worthwhile, educology--the end of educational research.

PART 2

1. Bias in Educational Research

1.1. When cloth is cut on a bias, it is cut obliquely relative to the grain of the fabric. The cut is a slanted one. When educational research is biased, it too is slanted. It can be slanted either in content or practice. If it is slanted in content, it runs counter to educology; and if in practice, to educational research methodology. Obviously, if it

is slanted in content the practice must be, and if the practice so the content. Educational research content does result from educational research practice.

1.2. It should be patent from Part 1 that the notion of value-free educational research as non-biased educational research is wrong-headed. Value is in all of educational research from the standpoint of its practice. Educational research practice, if it is to be adequate, must be governed by the intrinsic and instrumental values of such practice. Canons of function, form, and content must be adhered to. To run counter to educational research practice, then, is to neglect its values. Value is in most of educational research from the standpoint of its content. Science of education when it does not concern itself with human valuing is an exception. Thus, in many instances, running counter to educational research content is neglecting the warranted value descriptions of the teaching-learning process.

1.3. To summarize 1, biased educational research is educational research which is slanted in either its content or practice. Moreoever, when it is slanted in one it is slanted in the other. The bias in educational research results from non-adherence to the values of educational research methodology, and in educational research content (with the exception of educational science not concerned with human valuing) of non-adherence to the value descriptions of educology.

2. Prejudice in the Educational Researcher

2.1. To be prejudiced[7] is to judge before one has the cognitive basis for such judgment. But prejudice is more than premature judgment. It is judgment held to be incontrovertible, and so held in spite of the fact that

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[7]Gordon W. Allport's The Nature of Prejudice (New York: Addison-Wesley Publishing Company, 1954) is a comprehensive treatment of prejudice.

it cannot be warranted or can be shown to be non-warrantable. The irreversible nature of the judgment which is a prejudice arises from a feeling tone toward either the subject of the judgment or the effect of adhering to the judgment. For example, adherence to the prejudice that the female human being is sentimental[8] could be due either to disvaluing the female (a negative feeling tone toward the subject of the judgment) or to valuing social acceptance (a positive feeling to the effect of the judgment). If the subject is disvalued the prejudice is known as a negative one, if valued as a positive one.

2.2. The prejudiced educational researcher is one who because of feeling toward the subject or the effect of the research fixates on a judgment which is incompatible with educational research content. The educational researcher thereby sets aside the values of rational inquiry which are inherent in the values of educational research practice. Provided the prejudice is about what is taken to be valuable or what is valuable in education, setting aside of values in educational research content also occurs.

2.3. To summarize 2, bias enters educational research through the prejudiced educational researcher who intrudes values which are incompatible with the values of educational research. In so doing the educational researcher preempts the values of educational research practice. In the case that the prejudices are about educational values, warranted descriptions of what is taken to be or what is valuable in the teaching-learning process are likewise preempted.

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[8]Harrison G. Gough, "Identifying Psychological Femininity," Educational and Psychological Measurement, 1952, XII, 437.

PART 3

1. Exemplification Through MF Scales

1. The judgment that a woman's personality is biologically imprinted is a prejudice that underlies masculinity-femininity scales. Tests of masculinity-femininity are of various kinds. For example, one measure is based upon the ranking of toys by the subject. The toys, of course, are ones supposed to appeal to girls (e.g. dolls, cribs, dishes) and to boys (e.g. knives, cars, boats).[9] Another for older children, adolescents, or adults is based upon agreement or disagreement with statements supposedly indicative of masculine and feminine attitudes and interests. In the MMPI test[10] the MF scale is composed of 60 items, which according to Heston[11] consists of 27 items concerned with likes or dislikes of occupations or hobbies. Males like science and being a forest ranger but not poetry and being a librarian. The other 33 items are devoted to personality reactions in which the male is less emotional, less trusting, more sexually inverted, etc. These scales presume to differentiate males from females and also sexual deviates.

2. That the female's psyche is innate is clearly a prejudice, since such a judgment is incompatible with the state of ~~one~~ knowledge. Margaret Mead's studies of the range in standardization of sex temperaments among peoples show, as she states it, "that many, if not all, of the personality

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[9]M. Rabban, "Sex-role Identification in Young Children in Two Diverse Social Groups," Genetic Psychology Monographs, 1950, 42, 81-158.

[10]S. R. Hathaway and J. C. McKinley, Manual for the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory (Revised Edition), 1943 and Supplementary Manual for the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory (for Group Form), 1946, New York: The Psychological Corporation.

[11]Joseph C. Heston, "A Comparison of Four Masculinity Femininity Scales," Educational and Psychological Measurement, 1948, VII, 378.

traits which we have called masculine or feminine are as lightly linked to sex as are the clothing, the manners, and the form of head-dress that a society at a given period assigns to either sex."[12] Recall that Mead found the Arapesh man or woman typically to be content, passive, and secure while the typical behavior of the Mundugumor man or woman was violent, aggressive, and evidenced insecurity. The roles obviously were culturally induced.

3. Educational research which includes the use of MF scales or is based upon such use is biased. Thus, the praxiological inquiry by Westervelt into counseling of girls in schools is biased since reliance is placed upon MF scales. In Westervelt's words:

> The wide variety of tests developed by the trait psychologists to explore individual differences has indicated that the sexes seem to be more similar in aptitudes than they are in interests and values . . . These more conspicuous differences are that, on the average, boys place higher values on aggression, competition, and dominance; girls on nurturance, stability, and order.[13]

2. Exemplification Through Erikson's Inner Space

1. The judgment that a woman's role is biologically determined is a prejudice that underlies Erikson's Inner Space.[14] Erikson's concept is based upon Freud's ideal of the woman: wife, homemaker, and mother, and interpretation of women as inferior. The ideal is set forth in these words:

> /Mill[17]/ was perhaps the man of the century who best managed to free himself from the domination of customary prejudices. On

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[12] Sex and Temperament in Three Primitive Societies, New York: Morrow, 1963, p. 279.

[13] Esther M. Westervelt, "Counseling Today's Girls for Tomorrow's Womanhood." New Approaches to Counseling Girls in the 1960's, Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1966, p. 22.

[14] Erik H. Erikson, "Inner and Outer Space: Reflections on Womanhood," Daedalus, 1964, Spring, 588-593.

the other hand . . . he lacked in many matters the sense of the absurd, for example, in that of female emancipation and in the women's question altogether.

. . . . . .

Any girl, even without a suffrage or legal competence, whose hand a man kisses and for whose love he is prepared to dare all, could have set him right. It is really a still-born thought to send women into the struggle for existence exactly as men.

. . . . . .

Nature has determined women's destiny through beauty, charm, and sweetness. Law and custom have much to give women that has been withheld from them, but the position of women will surely be what it is: in youth an adored darling and in mature years a loved wife.[15]

The interpretation was presented in 1905 in "Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality." Women is the abnormal sex, because of her incompleteness (lack of a penis) she develops a sense of inferiority and shares the contempt felt by men for a sex which is lesser in so important a respect. This ideal and interpretation gives Erikson a basis for concluding from children's play that their different uses of space reflects different social patterns. The boys' space is exteriorized (high structures, motion, and conflict) reflecting their ambition, while the girls' is interiorized (low structures, static quality, and calmness) reflecting their lack of ambition (inferiority) and role of wife, homemaker, and mother. The different uses of space, furthermore, is supposed to arise from experience of their anatomy (e.g. the penis is external while the uterus is internal). As Erikson puts it: ". . . women have found their identities in their bodies and the needs of their issue, and seem to have taken it for granted that the outer space belongs to the men."[16]

2. That the Freudian ideal and interpretation is a prejudice is patent. Biological determinism is not a truth but a social myth aimed at women's

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[15]From Ernest Jones, The Life and Work of Sigmund Freud, edited and abridged by Lionel and Steven Marcus, New York: Basic Books, 1961, 117-118.

[16]Op. cit., p. 593.

repression. Women can be more than a body belonging to a man. Women can be human like a man. Women can transcend themselves and so be makers of themselves as so well stated in Simone de Beauvoir's The Second Sex.[17] The warranted description of the good life is personhood. To be a person is to create one's own history, and so go beyond binding differentials.

3. Educational research which includes as an assumption the Freudian role for women or is based upon such an assumption is biased. An instance of such bias is the philosophical and praxiological inquiry into the education of women by White. Consider his remarks:

> The failure of our educational system to take into account . . . basic differences between the life patterns of average men and women is at least in part responsible for the deep discontent and restlessness which afflict millions of women.[18]

> The considerable, and apparently increasing, majority of women will, and should, devote the first two or three decades after graduation to building and maintaining homes and families. This is a more arduous job than most men dream. Of the technical skills needed I shall speak presently. But a firm liberal education is of great help to a married woman.[19]

Another instance of such bias is Cless' analysis of academic procedures with suggestions as to their modification to realize the objective of educating women for a secondary role outside of the home. Women's primary role is still taken to be wife, mother, and homemaker.

> Men--and women--correctly infer that willingness to accept man's educational patterns shows lack of pride in that femininity. Therefore this modest proposal. The alternative--the educated women receiving recognition only as a pseudo man--appeals to women no more than it does to men.[20]

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[17]New York: Knopf, 1953, first published in 1949, translated from the French by H. M. Parshley.

[18]Lynn White, Jr., Educating Our Daughters, New York: Harper & Brothers, Publishers, 1950, p. 20.

[19]Ibid., p. 68.

[20]Elizabeth L. Cless, "A Modest Proposal for the Educating of Women," American Scholar, 1969, 38:4, 627.